AN

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

Manner of Aſſenting

TO THE

ARTICLES and *LITURGY*

OF THE

Church of *ENGLAND*;

Practiſed and Recommended by

Dr. *CLARKE*, Rector of St. *James's-Weſtminſter*,

In his Introduction to his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity.

In which alſo is attempted

An Explanation of the Word *HELL* in the Apoſtles Creed, and the Reaſons for the inſerting the Article of Chriſt's Deſcent thither.

Pſal. xii. v. 2.——*They do but*——*diſſemble in their double Heart.*
Heb.——*They ſpeak in a Heart, and a Heart.*

LONDON,
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BRITISH MUSEUM

An Inquiry into the manner of aſſenting to the Liturgy and Articles of the Church of England, *practiced and recommended by* Dr. Clarke, *in his Introduction to his Scripture account of the Trinity.*

§. 1. THE Governors of the Church of Chriſt have in all Ages thought it abſolutely neceſſary that there ſhould be an Agreement in Doctrine, that all ſhould ſpeak the ſame thing and be of one Mind. To this the Apoſtles of our Bleſſed Lord do exhort us with the moſt preſſing and cogent Arguments that can be uſed.: * *If there be any conſolation in Chriſt, if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of the ſpirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil this my joy, that ye be like-minded,—— of one accord, of one Mind.*——Says St. *Paul*, to the *Philippians*, and to the *Romans.*—— † *I beſeech you brethren mark them which cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have received, and avoid them.*----Says St. *Peter* || *There ſhall be falſe teachers among you, who ſhall privily bring in damnable hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them*---- * *Certain men*, ſays St. *Jude crept in unawares turning the grace of our God unto Laſciviouſneſs*, (the Condeſcention of our God to diſhonor) *and denying the only Lord God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*----*Deceivers* ſays St. *John.* † *Who*

* *Philip.* 2. 1. * *Jude*, v. 4. † *Romans ult.* 17. † 2 *Ep.* v. 7, 9, 10, 11. || 2 *Pet.* 2. 1.

confeſs not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh.----And therefore he thus Charges the Church of Chriſt, *the Elect Lady and her Children.*----*If there come any among you who bring not the Doctrine of Chriſt, having both the Father and the Son, receive him not into the Houſe, neither bid him God ſpeed; for he that biddeth him God ſpeed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

To preſerve this Union in Doctrine, there was from the very beginning of the Church, one certain form of Words agreed upon, which was to be the Rule by which all the Preachers were to guide themſelves; and in the ſucceeding Ages of the Church, when Errors at any time appeared, endeavors were uſed to reduce them by the ſame Methods which had been taken to prevent them. A general Summary Form of the Doctrine was agreed upon, and all the Preachers obliged to declare their Aſſent thereunto, before they were admitted to Preach.

§. 2. True indeed it is, that in later Ages many particular Churches in the World did commit great Errors in drawing up this Summary or Form of Doctrine, and none more than the Church of *Rome*; but at the Reformation theſe Errors were put away, and the Form of Doctrine reduced to the Rule of Truth, the Holy Scriptures, and declared to be no farther obliging than as agreeable thereunto. But to prevent all difference in Opinion, it has been agreed in every reformed Church, that all who take Orders ſhould firſt be ſatisfied, that the Form of Doctrine or publick confeſſion of the Church from which he ſeeks Orders, is agreeable to the Holy Scriptures. And in this the Church of *England* has been particularly careful.

I ſhall not inſtance our Canons, nor the form of Ordination, nor the Subſcription then required, nor the Oath of Canonical Obedience; which being things, tho' binding to the utmoſt, yet are rather of private

private Cognizance; and in which the Biſhop himſelf, who ordains the Preacher, is ſuppoſed to Judge the ſincerity of the Candidate for Orders. Leaving therefore theſe to the Conſideration of their Lordſhips; I ſhall only Note what the State has done, in order to preſerve Uniformity in Religion; and that the Preachers being all of one Mind, may all ſpeak the ſame things.

It is Enacted by the King and Parliament, * "*that* "*every Perſon who ſhall be preſented, collated, or put into* "*any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice, or Promotion----in* England, "*----ſhall in the Church----belonging to his----Benefice,----* "*within two Months----Read the Morning and Evening* "*Prayer,----and ſhall openly and publickly before the Con-* "*gregation there aſſembled, declare his unfeigned Aſſent,* "*and Conſent, to the uſe of all things therein contained* "*and preſcribed.----And that every Perſon who ſhall neglect,* "*or refuſe ----ſhall* ipſo facto *be deprived; ----and it* "*ſhall be lawful in all Patrons ----to preſent.----*

And it is further Enacted, "that every----Parſon "----ſhall Subſcribe the Declaration following.---- "*I. A. B.* do declare,----that I will conform to the "Liturgy of the Church of *England*, as by Law Eſta- "bliſhed,----*before the Ordinary of the Dioceſs.----And* "*ſhall procure a Certificate under his Hand and Seal,----and* "*ſhall publickly read the ſame----in his Pariſh Church,----* "*in the Preſence of the Congregation,----in the time of Di-* "*vine Service,----upon pain that every Perſon failing, ſhall* "*loſe ſuch----place.----*

"And *further----that no Perſon----ſhall be capable to* "*be admitted to any----Benefice----before he ſhall be----or-* "*dained Prieſt according to the form and manner by the* "*ſaid Book preſcribed,----and further----that no Perſon ſhall* "*----preach or read any Sermon or Lecture in any Church,*

* See Act for Uniformity, 14 *Car.* 2. uſually Printed with the Common-prayer-book.

" *or Chappel,---unleſs he be firſt approved---by the Archbiſhop*
" *or Biſhop----and ſhall in his preſence read the 39 Articles*
" *of Religion, with declaration of his unfeigned Aſſent to*
" *the ſame,*----&c.----

So careful the late Realm of *England*, (now the greateſt part of *Great-Britain*) in which the Soveraign Prince is Supreme Governor of the Church, has been to preſerve the Agreement of the Miniſters of this Church, in their Opinions about matters of Religion.

§. 3. And now one would be apt to conclude it utterly impoſſible, that any Miniſter of this Church ſhould differ from his Brethren, in any Article of Faith, fully and plainly ſet down in the Articles and Liturgy thus to be aſſented to. And we find this Declaration ſhut out a great many, who cannot as they ſay make it with a ſafe Conſcience. But of late there is an Expedient propoſed and recommended by a Member of our own Church, *a Prieſt, a Doctor of Divinity, a Rector of a Pariſh*; whoſe Inhabitants are many of them of the *firſt Quality*, and moſt of them *Nobility and Gentry*, even by *one who has the Honour to be one of Her Majeſties Chaplains*. This Gentleman tells us, " *this Aſſent* (to the Liturgy and Articles) *may* " *and muſt be given* to them *in ſuch a Senſe as may make* " *them conſiſtent with the Scriptures, and with themſelves:* " * *And not in ſuch a Senſe as the Words themſelves may* " *poſſibly and moſt obviouſly ſignify, or what they may vulgarly and carelſly be underſtood to mean* †

And ſhould this take place, ſhould every one be permitted to aſſent to Words in any Senſe, but their own proper obvious vulgar Senſe, there's an end at once of all the uſe of ſuch Aſſent; for every Man may take the Words in a different Senſe, and then

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* *See Introduction*, p. 25. † *See the ſame*, p. 22.

there

there is no longer any Agreement, and not only ſo, but he that hears the Declaration, may take it very different from him that makes it; and then there is no certainty, and indeed, no uſe at all in it.

§. 4. And therefore it cannot but be for the Honour of the Clergy of this Church, to inquire into this Principle, thus propoſed, recommended and practiced: For if it once obtains, we of the Laity can never know what we are to believe, or how we are to Worſhip God.

And here if we look abroad, we ſhall find no Church, or pretended Church in the World, ever allowed ſuch a Practice; but that it is every where expreſly required, that the Form of Words uſed as the Rule of Faith, ſhould be aſſented to without any Reſervation reſerved or expreſſed. And this appears by the very nature of the thing. The Declaration is to teſtify the Aſſent to that Opinion in Religion, which the Church has declared. For tho' all Proteſtant Churches agree in this firſt Principle, that the Scriptures are the only Rule of Faith; yet there are (as God knows, and all good Men bewail,) ſome differences among them in their Interpretations of the Scripture. And each inſiſts to have her own Doctrine taught to all her Members. Now ſhould the Miniſters of each Church be allowed to declare their Aſſent to the Doctrine of that Church, with this reſerve, [PROVIDED IT BE AGREEABLE TO THE SCRIPTURES, OF WHICH AGREEMENT I AM HEREAFTER TO JUDGE;] there would be no manner of uſe of a Declaration of Aſſent to any Form of Words, ſave only this.---- *I believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and will teach the Doctrine which to me ſhall appear to be contained in them.* What a *Babel* this would make the Church, we may inquire hereafter; in the mean time as we find no Church, or even pretended Church, without a Form of Doctrine, containing what they

take to be a particular and distinct Declaration of the Sense of Scripture; we must conclude they all insist to have the Scriptures understood their own way. And do not leave such a Latitude as the Doctor Assumes. And that the Doctor may not complain for want of Instances, I shall set down the Sense of *the dissenting Ministers in* London, above Fourscore of whom in their Heads of Agreement Printed 1691, thus expres themselves. "*As to what appertains to* "*soundness of Judgment in matters of Faith, we esteem it* "*sufficient that a Church acknowledge the Scriptures to be* "*the Word of God, the perfect and only Rule of Faith and* "*Practice, and own either the Doctrinal part of those,* "*commonly called the Articles of the Church of* England, "*or the Confession, or Catechisms, shorter or larger, com-*"*piled by the Assembly at* Westminster, *or the Confession* "*agreed on at the* Savoy, TO BE AGREEABLE TO "THAT RULE. You see they allow no explanation of the Confession, but when chosen, it must be assented to without Reserve.

§. 5. Nor (2) can such Reserve be allow'd in any *Civil State*, that requires Men to declare their being of *any particular Judgment* in matters of Faith, before they are admitted to Offices of Trust; for then the very intent of such Declaration would be evaded; for the State could never know what such Men believe of the Articles which they require them to Subscribe or Assent to.

§. 6. There is *one Instance* indeed that looks like an *Exception* to this my Assertion. The *Two Doctors* that were Burnt at *Constance*, with the Emperors Letters of safe Conduct in their Pockets, are said to have Suffer'd for not attending to this distinction, which is the Foundation of Dr. *Clarke's Principle*. They took the Letters in the *Common Sense of the Words*, without considering that the Church of *Rome* claims an Authority over the Emperor, and that consequently his Letters

Letters were to be ſo underſtood, as to make them *conſiſtent with that ſuperior Power*, and could defend them only againſt the *State*, but not againſt *the Church*. And ſo the poor honeſt Gentlemen were Burnt for their Ignorance. But it was an Age of Ignorance, and ſuch fine diſtinctions did not then appear. The whole *Council of Conſtance* had honeſty enough to put the matter upon another Foot. They own'd *the Breach of Publick Faith*, and laid it at the Door of Hereſy, which muſt be thus treated. This Principle was afterward invented by the School of *Ignatius Loyala* † to induce the great ones of that Church to break their Word, when it ſhould be their ſecular and preſent Advantage ſo to do. But then as the Maſters of that very School oblige their Diſciples to profeſs their Aſſent to all the Rules of their own Order, and to make their Vow in the common ſenſe of the Words; This will appear to be *a Practice of which they ſerve themſelves, but will not allow it to be turned upon them. So that* this is no Objection, and I ſhall go on to ſhew the Evil of this Practice.

§. 7. Therefore which is a Third Inſtance of this Evil, after an Aſſent given to a form of Words, the explaining ones ſelf to have taken thoſe Words in a Senſe different from what they commonly import, is *againſt the Light of Nature*, as appears in *Two* Particulars.

(1) The Men of *Gibeon* (*Joſh.* 9.) drew *Joſhua* into a League *expreſly contrary to his Intention*, but becauſe he made it *without providing by an expreſs Exception to have it void, in caſe they put upon him*, the League ſtood firm, with *a non obſtante* to his being not empowered to Treat further than his Commiſſion extended, and was not ſuffered to be *explain'd afterwards*,

† Vide Myſteria. P. P. Jeſuit. *pag.* 182. Edit. Lampropoli 1633.

tho'

tho' the error was found out in a very few Days. Now according to this new Principle of the Doctor, ſhall I ſay, or of the *Jeſuit Becanus*, there was nothing to be done by *Joſhua*, but declaring he was bound by an Authority Superior to both Parties, and could Act only as that Authority order'd, and what he Swore to muſt be underſtood in a Senſe *conſiſtent with that Authority*; whatever Senſe the Words *might vulgarly and moſt obviouſly Import*. But the *Sinners of Canaan* did not underſtand ſuch a diſtinction; they looked upon the Men of *Gibeon* as no longer *theirs*, but allied to *Iſrael*, and would have treated them accordingly; tho' they knew the obligations of *Iſrael* to extirpate all the Inhabitants of the Land; and had Father *Becan* been *Joſhua's* Confeſſor, *Gibeon* had fared no better than *John Huſs*, and *Jerom* of *Prague*.

§. 8. The other Inſtance I ſhall produce, is that of *Naaman the Syrian*; (2 *Kings* 5.) The *curing him of his Leproſy* was ſuch an Obligation, and the *manner ſo Miraculous*, that he became *a Proſelite upon it*, and declared his *Aſſent* to the Worſhip of the God of *Iſrael in a form of Words*; yet becauſe he would not quit his Poſt in the Government, which he could not keep without attending his Prince to the Idol Worſhip; he *excepts* that Inſtance; but then he made this Exception *publickly*, at the time he declared his Aſſent, he does not ſay to himſelf *my being in the Temple of* Rimmon *ſhall be an Act of Worſhip to the God of* Iſrael *who is Omnipreſent, and Omniſcient, and will Interpret this Act of mine accordingly, tho' I do not declare it ſo, till I ſee a proper time for it. For let the Place and other Circumſtances of this Worſhip, determine in the Mind of vulgar People, or of any one elſe, that I am a follower of* Rimmon; *I know my Duty to the God of* Iſrael *the Lord Jehovah, and am at liberty always to explain my ſelf, and every one that conſiders who, and what the God of* Iſrael *is, muſt know I can Worſhip him in any Place.* No! The Heathen

then Prince had more Honeſty; he knew very well, that all publick Acts of Worſhip determine the object of that Worſhip, not as the Worſhipper in his Mind may think, but as the Vulgar underſtand it. And that *worſhipping in the Temple* of *Rimmon*, would make him appear *a Worſhipper of Rimmon*, and would be Idolatry, notwithſtanding any *ſubſequent Declaration of his Intention, and of that Act of Worſhip, ſo as to make it conſiſtent with the Nature of that God, whom his Converſion obliged him to Worſhip.* Nay, he thought a *previous Declaration* would not do, and therefore asks Pardon for it.

§. 9. And *God* himſelf gave Teſtimony to the Honeſty of theſe Proceedings. For ſome Hundred Years after, when *Saul* out of Zeal to *Iſrael and Judah*, would have deſtroy'd thoſe poor *Gibeonites*; God ſent a Famine upon *Iſrael*, which was not removed till Juſtice was done on *the Man that deviſed againſt them.* 2 *Sam.* 21. 5. And yet there was all the Foundation imaginable for *this deviſing*, and in the Language of the Doctor, it would have been called *Sincerity*; for thereby *the Senſe* of the Aſſent given by *Joſhua*, to the *form of Words*, in which the League was drawn up, was *but reduced to be conſiſtent with that Commiſſion and Charge which God had given* Joſhua, *to deſtroy the Inhabitants of* Canaan, and which he plainly told the Embaſſadors of *Gibeon* he was obliged to Execute, and that if they were ſuch Inhabitants, he could not make a League with them. Yet becauſe he did make that League, without expreſly therein providing againſt the Trick they put upon him, you ſee God confirmed it ſo many Years after.

§. 10. I can never ſufficiently expoſe this Principle, of uſing *Words in a Senſe entirely Evaſive of what they are intended for*; and therefore the honeſt learned Reader will have Patience, while I more cloſely apply this Inſtance, and ſhew wherein it is Parallel. (1) AS

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the *Proteſtant Principle is known to all* of us, and we all agree that no Creed or Rule of Faith whatever is to be aſſented to, further than it can be proved by Scripture, and therefore approve and conſent to this Principle with *Archbiſhop Tillotſon*, *Biſhop Wake*, and *Mr. Chillingworth*; AND AS we think it well provided by *Queen Elizabeth*, that no body ſhould have a Fellowſhip in *Trinity Colledge*. (*Page* 13.) And by the Univerſity of *Cambridge*, that no body ſhould be made Doctor, *Page* 14. and by the *Church of England* that none ſhould be made Prieſt of this Church, *Page* 15. Without Swearing and Declaring as reſpectively ordered, that the Scripture ſhall be his Rule; AND AS all muſt think it highly Honeſt and Honourable in the Church of *England*, to declare this to be her Principle in her Articles, as mention'd by the Doctor, *Page* 15: SO alſo *the Charge was expreſs to the People of* Iſrael, againſt making any League with the Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan*, and this was the *Principle* upon which *Joſhua was to proceed in all Treaties* with Foreign States; namely, that *they ſhould not be the Inhabitants of* Canaan. (2) AS all Declarations of Aſſent to any forms of Creeds by Proteſtants, *are known to be by Men of the aboveſaid Proteſtant Principle*: SO the Swearing to the Treaty by *Joſhua*, was *known to be by one whom God had charged to deſtroy thoſe very Men, with whom he then made this League.* (3) BUT NOW INDEED there will appear ſome difference; for WHEREAS *Joſhua* very honeſtly *told* the *Gibeonites*, that *if they were ſuch Inhabitants he could not* treat with them: ONE CANNOT find that Dr. *Clarke* when he declared his Aſſent, ſaid alſo, *if the form be not to be proved by Scripture I cannot Aſſent.* (4) Yet if he had, that *would not have made it better*; *for* AS *Joſhua* took the Mens Word, and made a League with thoſe Men for their People, as being *fully ſatisfied they did not dwell in* Canaan: SO the Doctor, if he had aſſented to the

the Forms of the Church of *England*, muſt have done ſo, *as being ſatisfied of their agreeableneſs to Scripture.* (5) And *now we come to differ again*; FOR WHEREAS *Joſhua*, tho' he did, he knew not what, yet *would not afterwards take upon him to explain* the Senſe of the Treaty, ſo as to make it conſiſtent with his Commiſſion, but confeſſed his Error, in not firſt ſatisfying himſelf, whether the Men did really come from another Country: YET the *Doctor does not own his Error*, in aſſenting to what it ſeems he *did not underſtand* but *explains the meaning of the Words* to be ſuch, as he *now thinks the Creed ought to have been made in.* (6) And now Charity obliges me to Pray, that the Parallel may go *no further*, but that the ſincere Repentance of the Doctor, and all ſuch Aſſenters, (if any ſuch there be) may reſtore them to the Favor of God, before we paſs to what followed in times, when there *was a King in Iſrael*, and no Man might any longer do *that which was right in his own Eyes.*

§. 11. Should the Doctors *Royal Patroneſs*, or whoever it was that preſented him to his Rectory, deſire him now to reſign, and give this reaſon for it, that when he was preſented he was taken, not only to *believe the Scriptures, and that all Forms of Creeds, Confeſſions of Faith, and Articles of Faith*, are no further to be aſſented to, than they can *be proved from thence*, but alſo to be fully perſwaded that the Creeds received by the Church of *England*, and the Articles agreed upon by this Church, ARE THUS AGREEABLE TO SCRIPTURE, and *may be proved thence*; and that if the Doctor ſhould have then declared himſelf to have thought the contrary, he could not have been preſented; and conſequently he has now no Foundation TO HOLD, where the very reaſon of the HAVING is removed: *What could the Doctor ſay to this?* The Queſtion is not, *whether the Articles are agreeable to Scripture*; but whether the *Doctor aſſented to them as*

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ſo agreeable. If he *did not*, he could not be *inſtituted*; if he *does not*, how can he *enjoy*? Such ſort of aſſenting would unhinge all Contracts between Men, and render all Commerce at an end, and reduce Mankind to a State only fit for *Solitude.*

§. 12. Thus much for *the manner of Aſſent* recommended and practiſed by Dr. *Clarke.* Now let us enquire *upon what Foundation* ſuch a very extraordinary Practice *is built*; and this is only *the Ambiguity which the Doctor ſays is in almoſt all Words.* p. 22. And of which he gives for an Inſtance the Word *Hell* in the *Apoſtles Creed.* But this will not hold. For tho' there is a very *common Ambiguity* in the Word *God*, and that even in Scripture; where we find *One* ſtiled *the God of this World*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. whom we ſtile the *Devil*, and others called *Gods* who are *Men*, and others who are *Angels*, and *One* called *God* who is *Jeſus Chriſt*; yet *the Creed*, and all *our Forms* in *their obvious Senſe*, teach us to take the Word *God*, when ſpoken of *Chriſt*, *in the higheſt Senſe of the Word*, as oppoſed to Creature, and give ſuch further Accounts of him as are incompatible with any Creature, and thus take off all *Ambiguity* from that Word, when ſpoken of *Chriſt*: So that the Aſſent to our giving the Title *God* to *Chriſt*, in the Forms of the Church of *England*, muſt neceſſarily declare *Him the ſupreme, ſelf-exiſtent, and independent Being.* For there is no pretence of *Ambiguity*, when a Word which has a certain and determin'd Senſe contrary to all other Acceptations of it, is declared to be aſſented to in that *Senſe thus certain and determined.* And the Deſcription given by the Articles and Creeds to Jeſus Chriſt, makes the Term *God* in oppoſition to *Creature*, as *certain* as any *Definition in the Mathematicks*, can make any Term or Word in that *Science.* I will ſet down the Words in which the Articles define the Word or Term *God*, when ſpoken of *Chriſt.*

Art.

Art. 2. " *The Son, which is the Word of the Father* " *from Everlaſting, of the Father the very and eternal* " *God of one Subſtance with the Father, took Man's Na-* " *ture in the Womb of the Bleſſed Virgin, of her Sub-* " *ſtance, ſo that Two whole and perfect Natures, that is* " *to ſay, the Godhead and the Manhood were joined to-* " *gether in one Perſon, never to be divided, whereof is one* " *Chriſt, very God and very Man.*

Now if *here* remains any *Ambiguity*, where may we expect *Certainty*? He who declares his Aſſent to this Article, muſt at the ſame time confeſs *Jeſus Chriſt* to be God, in the ſame Senſe he confeſſes *God the Father to be God.* So again in the *Communion Service in the Liturgy*, which I pitch upon, as it requires the utmoſt Sincerity. For it is a *federal Rite, and ſuppoſes the Prevaricator to ſubmit to the ſame Suffering, the Sacrifice is then repreſented to ſuffer.* Now every Communicant ſays upon *Trinity Sunday*: *That which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the ſame we believe of the Glory of the Son and Holy Ghoſt, without any Difference or Inequality*; and he that *aſſents* to the Liturgy, *agrees* that this *ought to be ſaid.*

Here again, unleſs *the Glory of the Father* be ſomething diſtinct from *the Deity of the Father*, and that ſo diſtinct, as to be communicable to ſome Being which is not the Deity, and that Communicableneſs be in as full and ample manner as the Father himſelf enjoys that Glory; Which is impoſſible: we muſt underſtand the Word *Glory* here to imply *ſuch a Nature* in the Son and Spirit, *as is* in the Father, and that's *the very Godhead itſelf.* So that tho' the Word *Glory* is an ambiguous Term, yet when deſigned to ſignify the *Glory of God, as it is the Glory of God the Father without any Difference or Inequality*, it is no longer ambiguous, and he that aſſents to this Propoſition, *that the Glory of Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame Glory, as the Glory of God the Father, without any*

Diffe-

Difference or Inequality, muſt allow us to underſtand, that he declares *Jeſus Chriſt and God the Father to be one God, in Nature; one ſelf-exiſtent, independent, and abſolutely ſupreme Being*; for in theſe Attributes *the Glory of the Father* doth conſiſt; ſo that the pretence of *explaining Words becauſe of their Ambiguity*, which tho' ambiguous, are determined by full, proper, and certain Words, *is but a pretence and has no Foundation.*

§. 13. And therefore tho' the Word HELL in the Apoſtles Creed ſhould ſignify *one thing* to us Vulgar, and *another thing* to the Learned, yet this Inſtance as he puts it will not help the Doctor. For (1) this Word being *not defined* either in the Creed, or in the Article, more than by the Word *Deſcent*, may be capable of any Interpretation conſiſtent with *the Scripture, and with deſcending*; without *Breach of Unity or deſtroying the Foundation of the Chriſtian Faith.* But (2) it *being agreed by the Doctor*; that *both the Learned and the Vulgar* tho' they, as *he ſays*, diſagree in their Apprehenſions of the meaning of this Word, yet both thoſe Claſſes *have each their own certain determin'd Senſe*, ſo that the Term is no longer ambiguous to *either*; *all the Ambiguity lies in the Reader's Capacity only.* For aſſoon as the Doctor knows *this Reader* to be *Learned*, he knows he takes it *this* way; and aſſoon as he knows *that Reader* to be of the *Vulgar*, he agrees he takes it *that* way; and therefore *this is nothing at all to the purpoſe*; though we ſhould admit the Caſe to be as the Doctor thinks, *p.* 23. "*That every vulgar Engliſh Reader* "*underſtands that Article, as ſignifying Chriſt's de-* "*ſcending into the Place of the* Damned; *and all Learned* "*Men are ſatisfyed that the* Greek *Word* (ᾅδης) *in thoſe* "*Texts of Scripture, upon which this Article was founded,* "*does not ſignify, HELL*; but in general only THE "INVISIBLE STATE OF THOSE DEPARTED "OUT OF THIS WORLD. *And therefore with great*

great reaſon, underſtand it, not as the Word in modern ſpeech may ſeem to ſound to the Vulgar; but as it really ſignifies in the Original Texts of Scripture.

§. 14. It may be entertaining to my vulgar Brethren of the Laity, to ſee *what Foundation the Doctor has for this Aſſertion, though it be nothing to the Queſtion,* yet it will ſhew us how much the Doctor's Judgment is to be depended on, and what hopes *a vulgar Author may rationally entertain of being not entirely neglected.*—— The Word ἅδης, ſays the Doctor, *in thoſe Texts of Scripture, on which this Article is founded, does not ſignify* HELL, but in *general only the inviſible State of thoſe departed out of this World,* p. 23. So then the Doctor agrees that this Article is founded on Places of Scripture, in which, or ſome of which, the Word ἅδης is uſed; now the Queſtion is whether in thoſe Places this Word ἅδης ſignifies the *Place of the damned,* or in *general only the inviſible State of thoſe departed out of this World.* In Anſwer to this Queſtion. (1) The Word ἅδης being Greek, can have no relation to the *Old Teſtament,* further than it is the Verſion of *ſuch Word, as therein is ſpoken of Chriſt in his State of Separation of his Soul and Body.* Now *that Word* is שְׁאוֹל *Sheol,* for though the Seventy ſome time put ἅδης for קֶבֶר yet thoſe Places are not applicable to Chriſt. SHEOL קֶבֶר is indeed of *ambiguous ſignification,* ſuch as *Lake or Pit* with us; and ſometimes ſignifies *the Grave,* which is the *Pit where the Body is buried,* and at other times HELL, which is the *Bottomleſs Pit* and *Lake of Fire, Rev.* 20. *v.* 3. and 14. 15. and is accordingly tranſlated by the Seventy λάκκος, which ſignifies *Lake or Pit. Ezek.* 32. *v.* 21. But it never can ſignify *the State of the Dead in general, which muſt take in* HEAVEN *as well as* HELL. Nor is ever uſed in the *Old Teſtament,* but with ſuch additional Words, and Circumſtances, either of the Place or Perſon, as will determine any mean capacity to judge,

whether it means *Hell* or *the Grave*. And if it was not ſo determined, yet the ambiguity will not hold in this Inſtance *as the Doctor puts it*. For either the Learned muſt mean HELL or *the Grave*, if they take ἅδης as the Verſion of *Sheol*,—— and then either they take the *Grave* for *Hell*, or *agree with us*, and if they take the *Grave* for *Hell*, that's *not the general State* of the Dead; many *Millions* of Dead never did, nor can come *to the Grave*. Many great Nations *burnt* their Dead. Multitudes have been *drowned*, many have been devoured by *wild Beaſts*, none of which are or can be buried. Not to ſay that *this meaning* of the Words puts a Senſe upon them, which they are not capable of. Chriſt did *not deſcend into the Grave*; had he done ſo, he muſt *have gone Alive thither*; for the Dead do not move themſelves, and he that Deſcends Locally muſt be agreed to *move himſelf*.

(2) I ſaid above, that *Sheol* —— never can ſignify *the general State of the Dead*. Now this being contrary to what great Men have ſaid upon their own Authority, it behoves me to ſhew it is a greater Authority by which I contradict them, namely, that of *the very Scriptures themſelves*. The Scriptures uſe it to expreſs *a Place directly oppoſite to Heaven*. But it is no where uſed for *Heaven*, nor with ſuch other deſcriptions of Place, or of Perſons in that Place, as may lead us to take it *for Heaven*; ſo that we muſt conclude *it cannot ſignify* Heaven *in any Text*, for then it could not be made a place *contrary to Heaven in any other Text*. And if it does not ſometimes ſignify *Heaven*, it cannot any where ſignify *the general State of the Dead*, ſome of whom muſt be allowed *to be in Heaven*, or at leaſt in ſuch Place as cannot be called by any Name whatever, by which the Place directly oppoſite to Heaven is properly called. So that either he muſt take it for *Hell*, that is as the vulgar do, for the Place of the Damned, or find ſome other *Authority*

thority different from the Scripture to Authoriſe the Acceptation of it, for *the State of the Dead.*

(3) And indeed there is an Authority extant, but it is *entirely Pagan.* The Heathen God *Pluto* was *ſuppoſed by them* to have had the Government of *all departed Souls good and bad. Thoſe* he placed in *Elyſium*, and *theſe* in *Torments* as *they thought*, and this *Pluto* had divers Names, of which one was ἅδης *Hades*, and *the inviſible State of the Dead*, was by the Worſhippers of *Pluto*, uſually called by the Name of *Pluto's* or *Hades's State* or *Kingdom*, and at length chiefly HADES's. But when *Chriſtians* uſed the Word, one cannot but ſuppoſe they underſtood with St. *Paul*, the *Gods* of the Heathen to be *Devils*, and therefore when *they* ſaid (to *Hades's*,) they could not but mean what we do when we ſay----*to Hell*, meaning thereby *the Place of the damned and of Devils.* And this diſtinction we find in St. *Luke* Chap. 16. *Lazarus was carried to Abrahams Boſom, Dives to Hades*, i. e. *Hell. The Heathen Authors who knew no Heaven* but *Pluto's Elyſium*, called that and the reſt of his Kingdom *Hades*; but the Chriſtian Church which holds the Faith of the World to come called *Heaven*, (as we do) a Place diſtinct from *Hell*, and called *Pluto's Kingdom*, the Kingdom of Satan and Hades *Hell.* So that the *Doctor and all his Learned Men are Erroneous in this Point*, and *he has in this no inſtance of Ambiguity here*, though ſuch an Inſtance would not have help'd him as I have ſhewn.

§. 15. There is indeed *another Authority* for underſtanding the Word in the Apoſtles Creed as the Doctor ſays *the Learned do*, and I muſt confeſs there *is a ſet of Men who profeſs and are taught ſo to underſtand it.* But this is not as *it is the ſenſe of the Word* ἅδης: but as it is the ſenſe *a certain Authority* thought fit to impoſe upon the Article in the Creed, in which all the *Learned in the Aſſemblies Catechiſm*, and the *vulgar*

of the Kirk of Scotland underſtand it, though they cannot read Greek, or have not heard of *ἅδης*. But ſo much muſt be ſaid for them, they do it *without any reſerve*, the Creed ſtands fairly among them with this Note in the Margin, over againſt the Article *he deſcended into Hell.*---- i. e. *continued in the ſtate of the Dead, and under the Power of Death till the Third Day*; ſo that though the Learned on that ſide underſtand as the Doctor ſays, it is not for the *Reaſons alledged by the Doctor*, nor is there *any Ambiguity among them*, for they have declared in what ſenſe they underſtand the Words, and the inſtance will not at all help the Doctor, *though the Kirk ſhould come in to his Aſſiſtance.* Unleſs there remains an Ambiguity, the Doctor has no advantage by them. His Argument for ſpeaking one thing and meaning another, is from *the Ambiguity of the Words.* His inſtance of this Ambiguity is the differing acceptations of the Word HELL in the Creed, which has *no differing acceptations among thoſe who make the Aſſemblies Catechiſm their* Form and Confeſſion; for among ſuch *the Vulgar and the Learned all take it the ſame way.*——

It may occaſion an enquiry how it comes to paſs, that Doctor *Clarke* did not inſtance the Aſſemblies Catechiſm, ---- and Mr. *Baxter*; who alſo in his Paper called Mr. *Baxter's Senſe of the ſubſcribed Articles of Religion*, Printed 1689, thus explains himſelf. *Act.* 3. *He went down into Hell, that is, into Hades, the State of ſeparated Souls*, but had the Doctor quoted theſe Authorities, he had found the Ambiguity remov'd; and then this had been no inſtance for him. The Teacher honeſtly tells his meaning, and leaves himſelf no opportunity of an After-Explanation.

§. 14. Perhaps, the vulgar Reader may from the laſt named Authorities, think the Doctor right in the meaning of this Word *Hell, &c.* So that there is *ſomewhere an Ambiguity*, though the Doctor miſs the particular

particular Poſition of it. For otherwiſe ſo learned a Body as the Aſſembly of Divines at *Weſtminſter*, would not thus have explained the Article, or the Kirk of *Scotland* approved it; and Mr. *Baxter* have followed them; and therefore to prevent *all Error on that account*, I ſhall ask leave to put this matter in a true Light. And this I will eſſay to do (1) by ſhewing *the true meaning of the Words* (2) by propoſing what ſeems to be *the true reaſon of our Bleſſed Lord's Deſcent*; (3) and *of placing this Article in the Creed* for the whole Chriſtian Church to believe and profeſs.

(1) The Words are —— HE DESCENDED INTO HELL. *Deſcended* implies *a Motion downwards*, and conſequently deſcending into Hell, implies, that *Hell* muſt be a *Place*, and that Place below us.

Here I expect the Learned will be upon me, and oppoſe Five Difficulties; (1) That this implies the *Souls* of Men ſeparated from their Bodies to be *in place*. (2) That Place to be *in the Earth*. (3) Thoſe *Souls* to be *tormented* with *material fire*, tho' diſembodied. (4) That they are *in torments before the General Judgment*. (5) That *our Saviour ſuffered alſo theſe Torments*. To all which I anſwer;

(1) Souls are certainly *in place* during this Life, and to ſuppoſe them *not in place* during the next Life, is either *to deny their Exiſtence*, or aſcribe to them *Omnipreſence*.

(2.) No Man can ſay there is *not ſuch a Place in the Bowels of the Earth*; We have the ſame *good Authority*, for ſaying there is, as the Aſſembly appears to have had for making *Abus the general State of the Dead*; the Heathens affirmed both the one and the other. And we have a better Authority than that: We find *the Holy Ghoſt by St.* Paul, telling us of a Place in *the lower Parts of the Earth*, whether our Saviour

viour *deſcended that he might fill all things*, Eph. 4. 9, 10. Now theſe lower Parts of the Earth could not ſignify the *Grave*, for that was in *the ſurface of the Earth*, not in the lower Parts of it. Nor did our Lord *deſcend thither*, which is a voluntary Motion, and is oppoſed to his aſcending —— *that he aſcended, what is it but that he deſcended firſt into the lower Parts of the Earth*: He voluntarily, and by his own Power, *aſcended and deſcended*: And as Heaven is the Place *to which he aſcended*; the Place, to which *he deſcended* in the lower Parts of the Earth, muſt be that which is *oppoſite to Heaven*, and that is *Hell*.

We have alſo the Holy Ghoſt in the Old Teſtament, telling us of *a Fire* (Deut. 32.) *which in the end of things*, v. 20. *ſhall*, v. 22. *burn from the loweſt Hell*, the Hebrew may be render'd —— *And the Eternal loweſt Hell ſhall burn, and ſhall conſume the Earth with her encreaſe, and ſhall ſet on fire the foundations of the Mountains.* And the ſame Holy Spirit in the New Teſtament telling us, *that the Heavens and the Earth* (i. e. *this viſible World*) *are kept as fewel for this fire.* 2 Pet. 3. 7. And *that the ſmoke of this pit aſcends for ever and ever.* Rev. 19. 3.

(3, 4.) As to *Souls being tormented by material Fire without the Interpoſition of their Bodies*, there is no difficulty in that; for any *Vehicle* whatever, by the Appointment of God, may be the Conveyance of Senſation, during the Interval between the Days of Death and of the Reſurrection. The Body we now inhabit is *ſuch* to the Soul at preſent, for as *matter cannot think, neither can it perceive*; nay, it is much *more rational*, to ſuppoſe that the Soul, which now perceives by the Interpoſition of its Body, ſhould hereafter perceive *without ſuch Interpoſition at all, than that* it ſhould be capable of perceiving *only* by the Interpoſition of its *own proper and peculiar Body*. For the

the Perception ſpoken of, is *the being affected by the motion of external matter*; and all bodily Pain in this Life is a *troubleſome motion of external matter*; ſo that *there is no difficulty in the Hypotheſis thus far.* To which add, that by *the very Oeconomy of things ſince the Creation, this appears neceſſarily ſo*; for to *Adam* the Penalty of his eating the forbidden Fruit, was —— *In the day thou eateſt thereof dying thou ſhalt dye*, Gen. 3. 34. but *the reſolution of his Body to duſt*, was an additional Puniſhment after he had ſinned, and was inflicted upon account of a particular circumſtance of his ſin. *v.* 17. —— *becauſe thou haſt hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and haſt eaten — in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat. v.* 19. — *till thou return to the ground: for duſt thou art, and to duſt ſhalt thou return.* So then whatever can be underſtood by *dying thou ſhalt dye*, may truly be affirmed to be inflicted upon Men *as ſoon as* they have *ſinned without poſſibility of Repentance*, i. e. as ſoon as *they dye impenitent.* Now then *the reſolution of the Body to duſt* is one ſort of Death, and the *dying thou ſhalt dye*, another, as appears by this, that they are *different Puniſhments* threatned at *different times*, and for *different faults*: And the Goodneſs of God admitting Men to a Poſſibility of Repentance till they return to duſt; it follows that this *turning to duſt*, which is the *Death of the Body* is FIRST, and the *dying thou ſhalt dye* is SECOND in order of time; ſo that this *dying thou ſhalt dye* is properly called the *ſecond Death.* And of this ſecond Death we read *Rev.* 20. that it is *the being caſt into the Lake of Fire.* Now put all this together, and tell me whether it does not neceſſarily follow, that *every impenitent ſinner at his death is thus puniſhed.* And thus I have anſwered both the third and fourth Objections at once. To which add, that *Eternity is not meaſured by Succeſſion as Time is*, and that therefore when we are once launched into the Abyſs

of

of Eternity, Time is no more. And in that reſpect, that which is to us near Six Thouſand Years, is nothing to the departed Souls. For inſtance, ſince the Death of *Abel* is to us near Six Thouſand Years, but to righteous *Abel* no time at all, he being now not in Time, but in Eternity: And ſo of ſinful Souls; there is no Objection to our ſaying, they are now in Torments, upon any account of Inequality of thoſe Torments, as to their being inflicted before the Day of the General Reſurrection. And if this Objection, *viz.* of the Inequality of the Puniſhment be removed, the reſt fall of Courſe. For a particular Judgment at the Death of every Man, may be notified and confirmed by the General Judgment at the Reſurrection of the Body. So that we may ſafely conclude, *there is a Place under the Earth, where Damned Souls are tormented as ſoon as they dye.*

(5.) And now it will not follow, *that our Bleſſed Lord after His Death, actually ſuffered theſe Torments,* tho' he was there; he might deſcend to this miſerable Place on a very different account; And this leads me to the Second Particular, propoſed namely to ſhew for what purpoſe our Bleſſed Lord may be ſaid to deſcend thither.

2. For our *Bleſſed Lord's Deſcent into Hell, the Scripture aſſigns Two Reaſons,* but denies that he there ſuffered any thing; the Words —— *thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell* prove the laſt; For had he been expoſed to ſuffer in Hell, he had been forſaken of God. He was ſo forſaken when he ſuffered on the Croſs, *Pſ.* 22. 1. *John* 19. 30. but all his Sufferings *were then finiſht.* The Buſineſs of his Deſcent is declared in Two Places; *firſt, to preach to ſuch as had not heard of the Goſpel, and to ſave ſuch of 'em as would believe; ſecondly, to triumph over thoſe Infidels that would not believe, and the Apoſtate Angels their Fellows.* *The firſt* is expreſſed in thoſe Words

Words of St. *Peter*, 1 *Ep. ch.* 3. *v.* 18, 19, 20. and the 2*d* in thoſe of St. *Paul*, *Col.* 2. 15. Chriſt *having ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them.*

The Words of St. *Paul* are plain, but thoſe of St. *Peter* have a difficulty *in the Verſion, not in the Original*, which I thus render, —— *Chriſt being dead in Body, but alive in Spirit*; In which alſo [*even in that* Spirit, *in which*] *he went and preached to the Spirits in Priſon, that formerly were not perſwaded* [i. e. had no Arguments of Perſwaſion uſed to them, *Gal.* 1. 10.] *then* (for inſtance) *when in the days of Noah*, &c. Neither will this *Hypotheſis* make ἅδης *the General State of the Dead before our Saviour's time or ſince.* For it only ſuppoſes ſuch to have been freed from thence, who could not hear of the Goſpel in their Life time; the reſt are either in *Abraham's Boſom* with *Lazarus*, or in Hell *in Torments* with *Dives*. Which laſt only is Hell, as diſtinct from the firſt; and whatever other Difficulties may ariſe, this is plain, the *Priſon* in St. *Peter* was not *Heaven*, and they who had *Moſes and the Prophets* —— might if they would have kept themſelves out of the number of thoſe miſerable Wretches, who *were not perſwaded*, and therefore in Hell; and unleſs we ſuppoſe all the Holy Men under the Law, and even *Daniel* himſelf, to have been Infidels, we muſt agree that ſome of them, who had *Moſes and the Prophets*, did not come unto that *Place of Torments*, which poor *Dives* found very different from that of *Abraham's* Boſom. So that ἅδης will not be proved to be the general State of the Dead, tho' ſome Souls went from thence with our Saviour to Heaven. And this was the Judgment of the Church in the Days of the very Apoſtles themſelves, as appear'd by the publick Records of the City of *Edeſſa*, which *Euſebius* ſaw and copied; which teſtified that

St. *Thaddeus* taught the Citizens, that *Chriſt being crucified, deſcended into Hell, and broke the Partition Wall, which was never broken before,* i. e. *paſſed thro' the impaſſible χάσκα* mentioned *Luke* 16. 26. —— *and roſe again, and raiſed with him dead that had ſlept of old; and that he deſcended alone, but aſcended to his Father, accompanied with a great Multitude.*

So alſo St. *Ignatius* in his Epiſtle to the Trallian Church —— "Chriſt deſcended into Hell alone, "but aſcended again with a great Multitude, "having overthrown the partition Wall which ſtood "from the Beginning.

And that this was the Faith in the Days of *Euſebius*, appears by his putting down that Paſſage of St. *Thaddeus* without any Refutation; and ſeems agreed to by thoſe, who ſay this Article was put into the Creed about that time.

3. And now we are come to enquire why this Article was put into the Creed, and for this, Two Reaſons may be aſſigned;

Firſt, Certain it is, the Buſineſs of the Apoſtles was to convert the Heathen World, now one may rationally conclude, one Objection would be made from the State of their Anceſtors, before the preaching of the Goſpel: If they were ſaved, might the Heathen ſay, why may not I? To this, upon this Hypotheſis the Apoſtles might anſwer —— If they are ſaved, it is by Faith in that Goſpel you now hear, which Chriſt himſelf deſcended into Hell to preach to them.

Secondly, Another Reaſon is our Edification, for ſince we read, *that there is no Name given under Heaven, by which Men muſt be ſaved, but that of Chriſt Jeſus; neither is there* Salvation in any other. *Acts* 4. 12. It muſt teach us very much to value that Salvation, which now is offered to us, and engage us to do all in our Power to propagate this Faith, which all

muſt

muſt hear of in order to Eternal Life; and which the Son of God went to Hell to propagate among thoſe, who in their Life-time did not hear of it.

And now we may conclude, that the Kirk are not well adviſed in their continuing this Explanation, or rather, Expunction of this Article, if they do indeed continue it. And the vulgar Reader cannot *by this* conclude there is *an ambiguity in the Words.*

§. 15. True indeed, there is another *Ambiguity* in the Word *Hell*, but it will not come within the Compaſs of this Debate; for Dr. *Clarke* himſelf will not upon any account agree to it. The Socinians, ſome of them at leaſt, are of Opinion, that there is no Hell at all; and to ſuch, the Article He deſcended into Hell, muſt be interpolated either to ſignify ſuch a State of the Dead, as is conſiſtent with our Lord's Exiſtence, or nothing at all; but of this enough.

§. 16. And thus having ſhewn, that *this manner of declaring his Aſſent*, Practiſed and Recommended by Dr. *Clarke*, is *evaſive of the end of ſuch Declaration*, contrary *to the Law both of Church and State*, againſt the *Law of Nature, and the Law of God*, invented *in the School of Ignatius Loyola*, and without *any Foundation at all*, whether we reſpect the *Terms in the Form*, to which the Aſſent is declared, or the Word *Hell* in the Apoſtles Creed, which the Doctor urges as a Preſident; It may be neceſſary to add in this place a moſt humble and earneſt Requeſt to all the Laity, that they would believe the Clergy in earneſt, when they declare their Aſſent to the Doctrine received in the Church of *England*; and that they would ſtill continue to take the Creed in the obvious and natural Senſe of the Words: For in that Senſe only it is poſſible for us to keep the Unity, intended by ſuch Declarations to be preſerved.

§. 17. And now I muſt ask Dr. *Clarke* in the Spirit of Meekneſs, whether *this manner of declaring ones Aſſent*, is not ſpeaking to the Church in an unknown *Language*? For if the Words are not to be taken in the common, vulgar, and obvious Senſe, but in ſuch a Senſe as may make 'em, in the Opinion of the Speaker, agreeable to what he thinks to be the Senſe of Scripture, unleſs that Senſe be agreed before-hand, no Hearer can know what the Speaker means: And we cannot ſuppoſe that Senſe is agreed before-hand, becauſe the Agreement of the Senſe of Scripture is the very end of that Declaration.

Hear what St. *Paul* ſays of *ſuch Practices*, and *how conſiſtent it is with the common Good of the Church*.

—— *He that ſpeaketh in an unknown tongue, ſpeaketh not unto Men, but unto God* —— 1 Cor. 14. 2. And again, v. 8. —*If the Trumpet give an uncertain Sound, who ſhall prepare himſelf to the Battel: So likewiſe you, except you utter with your tongue words eaſy to be underſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken, ſo you ſhall ſpeak to the Air?*

§. 18. And this had *concluded my Diſcourſe*, had I not found a very great Inducement from the Doctor himſelf to proceed. He threatens every *careleſs Writer with neglect*. This obliges me to ſee *how careful a Writer the Doctor himſelf is*; that I may accordingly hope to be *peruſed or neglected*; for I do not think what I have offer'd requires an Anſwer. It is intended to perſwade the Doctor to repent, and that is all the Anſwer neceſſary. And for this purpoſe it is neceſſary to note ſome of the Errors, or at leaſt Inadvertences in the Doctor's Preface.

(1) *Page* 4. The Doctor ſays, that whatever OUR LORD HIMSELF TAUGHT was to us the RULE OF TRUTH, whatever —— *the Apoſtles* —— *wrote*----*was*---- a PART OF THE *Rule of Truth*----

Now

Now if any invidious Perſon would faſten upon the Doctor, *the Opinion* I have heard, maintain'd by ſome ſtiff Aſſerters of the *Unitarian Creed*, viz. *that part only of the Scriptures is the Word of God.* And if they ſhould explain themſelves, and ſay that no more of the whole is God's Word, that *what our Lord ſaid himſelf*, I don't foreſee how the Doctor can defend it. But indeed this is not conſiſtent with what the Doctor has done, for of his 1252 Paſſages, very few are the Words of our Saviour, and ſome are the Sayings of the Devil.

(2) *Page* vii, to *p.* ix. The Doctor fills Two Pages and a half, with an Account how it came to paſs, *that Creeds and Confeſſions of Faith were enlarged, and determinations of unneceſſary Conſequences grew more minute.* But this ſeems not all to the purpoſe, unleſs the Doctor can perſwade us that it is an unneceſſary Queſtion; whether *Jeſus Chriſt, whom we adore as ſuch, be the Supreme Self-exiſtent Independent God.* Now was this ſo, the Doctor has been taking Pains to little purpoſe; though the Truth is, he is very far from determining the Queſtion, unleſs by *the very denying his being.* Hear what he ſays in his Book *p.* 276. The Son is, ſays he, *neither made nor ſelf-exiſtent.* Now if we take the Word in the obvious Senſe, *a made-being* is a *Creature*, and a *not-made-being* is the *Creator.* Now if he have any Being, it muſt be ſuch an one as *never did nor ever can exiſt*; the Doctor ſays, he is *not made, nor ſelf-exiſtent*, what can this be? If God, he is *ſelf-exiſtent*, if *not made*, he is *God*, if *not ſelf-exiſtent* he is *Creature*, if *Creature* he is *made.* So that the Doctor muſt be allowed to *determine very minutely between God and Creature*, ſo as to find a *middle Being, which is neither the one nor the other.* But if this middle Being ſhould prove a *non-entity*, as ſurely that muſt be,

which

which is neither *Creator* nor *Creature.* What then becomes of the Doctor's minute Determination?

(3) And now the Doctor has reduced the Narrative to *p.* ix. but here he is again quite out of the way; for though it be true, *that every reformed Church requires their Confeſſions to be received, upon no other Authority than becauſe they are founded on Scripture:* Yet it does not follow that they require them to be received *in no other ſenſe,* than that *wherein every private Man thinks they are found in Scripture,* and that therefore each *private Man has liberty, and* muſt *put his own ſenſe upon the Confeſſion, and upon the Scripture;* for the Queſtion is not *whether the Scripture is the Rule of Faith,* that's agreed; nor is the Queſtion, *whether the Confeſſion and Creed have their Authority from Scripture only,* for that alſo is agreed; but the Queſtion is, *when a Confeſſion of Faith is drawn up, and Men ſubſcribe to it in Teſtimony, that they allow it to be agreeable to Scripture, whether after ſuch ſubſcription they may declare it ſo agreeable, by explaining Negatives affirmatively, and Affirmatives negatively;* if they think *the Confeſſion will not otherwiſe agree with Scripture:* And therefore the Teſtimony, of the *incomparable Archbiſhop* Tillotſon, *and the very learned and judicious Biſhop* Wake, *and the excellent Mr.* Chillingworth, are not for the Doctor's purpoſe at all, *and the Statutes of Queen* Elizabeth are againſt him; *inaſmuch as they oblige the Fellows of* Trinity *to ſtudy the Scriptures, and conſequently make one preſume, ſuch are at leaſt well apprized of the Doctrine the Scriptures contain, and knew when they ſubſcribed, whether the Articles were agreeable thereunto,* and need not be at ſo much pains now to explain themſelves.

(4) And now for *the Doctor's Application, p.* xvi. he tells us, that he has *collected all the Texts relating to the Doctrine of the ever bleſſed Trinity, to ſhew thereby not the ſound of ſingle Texts, which may be eaſily miſtaken, but the whole*

whole Tenor of Scripture; which is a fallacy put upon himſelf by the Doctor, for the true meaning of a Text (unleſs it be ſuch an one as contains an entire and perfect Propoſition) cannot be known without conſidering the Context; and 1250 ſuch Paſſages, ſo taken out of their proper Places, are but *ſingle* Texts, whoſe *ſound may as eaſily be miſtaken as one.*

(5) The Citations brought by the Doctor out of the Fathers, are *p.* xvii. recommended by him as Proofs, "*only of the inconſiſtency of the Authors with* "*themſelves*, and *to ſhew how eaſy and natural that no-* "*tion muſt be allow'd to be with ſo many Writers,* "*could not forbear expreſſing ſo CLEARLY AND DI-* "*STINCTLY, even frequently, when at the ſame time* "*they were about to affirm, and endeavouring to prove* "*ſomething not very conſiſtent with it*; a Complement ſomething extraordinary. But ſee how much more conſiſtent with himſelf the Doctor is, for his next Words are, *and the greateſt part of the Writers* before, and at *the Time of the Council of* Nice, *were* (*I think*) *really of that Opinion* (*THO' THEY DO NOT ALWAYS SPEAK VERY CLEARLY AND CONSISTENTLY,*) *which I have endeavour'd to ſet forth in thoſe Propoſitions.* Now either the Fathers mention'd in the firſt Sentence, are ſuch as differ from the Doctor in what they expreſs CLEARLY AND DISTINCTLY, or the Doctor is not conſiſtent with himſelf, in ſaying in one Place they EXPRESS CLEARLY AND DISTINCTLY, what in the very next Sentence he ſays, THEY DO NOT ALWAYS SPEAK VERY CLEARLY *about*; ſo that HE DOES BUT THINK, that *is, he is not poſitive they are of his Opinion*: But that is not all----he goes on.----*I do not cite Places out of thoſe Authors, ſo much to ſhew what was the Opinion of the Writers themſelves, as to ſhew how naturally Truth ſometimes prevails by its own Native clearneſs and Evi-*

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dence, even againſt the moſt ſettled Prejudices. —Now is this the *Spirit of Meekneſs*, which the *Doctor requires in all that anſwer him*; is it not inhuman to call in a Witneſs, and then to tell him he is not credible, nay worſe, that he was called only to ſhew, *how inconſiſtent he was with himſelf*, and how much in his own Teſtimony the Truth prevails againſt his Prejudices? Is it not the Spirit of a Spaniſh Inquiſitor, to interrogate with a Reſolution predetermined not to believe? Is it not? —But I'll forbear, for thus *our Lord was perſecuted*, he was interrogated, *but with a Reſolution to condemn him ſay, what he would.* Luke 22. 67, 68.

(6) I have another Remark or Two, and I have done. The Doctor (*p.* 19.) "makes it a "thing *very deſtructive of Religion—the under-* "*ſtanding human, and perhaps modern Forms of* "*ſpeaking* ——— *according to the accidental* "*Sound of the Words* ——— *and then picking* "*out ſome few ſingle Texts of Scripture, which* "*to Minds already ſtrongly prejudiced muſt needs* "*ſeem to ſound the ſame.* —Good God! what would the Doctor have young Students do, if they may not attend to Sounds of Words? To what muſt they have recourſe for Direction? But they muſt not mind human Forms of ſpeaking—*but attend to the Scriptures only*—agreed, let that be the Rule, and we ſhall ſoon find no neceſſity for *Propoſitions* either of the Doctor, or any Body elſe.

7. Here

(7) Here again *p.* 20. The Doctor repeats his great Authority for what he does, "*be-*
"*cauſe all reformed Confeſſions are confeſſedly*
"*founded on Scripture. Therefore,* ſays he, *every Perſon may reaſonably agree to ſuch forms, whenever he can in any Senſe at all reconcile them to Scripture.*

Now the Words *any Senſe at all* ſuppoſe, *that in ſome Senſe* they may be reconciled to Scripture. Let us ſee how this will help the Doctor, the thing chiefly Queſtion'd is *the Nature of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; this the Articles of our Church have aſſerted to be the ſame *ſupreme independent ſelf-exiſtent Deity with that of God the Father*, and *the ſame human Nature* with each of us, the Words I have already ſet down in thoſe Remarks.

Now the Doctor in his Propoſitions makes *this Nature of Jeſus Chriſt to be ſomething*, but is cautious of ſaying *what*, this he ſays however, *that they are to be Cenſured who preſume to affirm that he is the ſelf-exiſtent Subſtance*, p. 276. prop. 14.

And again, they who affirm the Son and Spirit to be (*individually with the Father*) *the ſelf-exiſtent Being*, in reality, take away their very Exiſtence p. 292. prop. 23.

Now if theſe Propoſitions of the Doctors be *in any Senſe at all to be reconciled with the Scripture*, the Article of the Church *muſt*

be falſe and in no Senſe at all to be ſo reconciled.

For the Propoſitions affirm *one* thing, and the Article *the very direct contrary*; If the Father be *the ſelf-exiſtent Being*, and the Son be *the very Eternal God of one Subſtance with the Father*, as the Article ſays, then muſt the Son alſo be *the ſelf-exiſtent Being*; and how this and the Doctors Propoſitions which ſay, the *Son is not the ſelf-exiſtent Being*, are in any ſenſe capable of being reconciled I cannot ſee; and if they are not in any ſenſe capable of being reconciled *together*, one of them can in no ſenſe be *reconciled to Scripture*. So that the Rule the Doctor goes by is miſtaken by him, whether it be in its ſelf right or not. However ſo much we learn from hence, that the Doctor *does not underſtand the Articles at all*, for he ſays, p. 21. That he is *indiſpenſably bound not to underſtand them in ſuch Senſe, as is different from that of Scripture*; and he elſewhere gives us the Senſe of Scripture in this point in a manner very *different from the Article*. So that all that can be ſaid for the Doctor is, that he did not *underſtand this Article of our Church, when he gave his aſſent to it in the moſt publick and ſolemn manner*.

(8) I fear I ſhall employ too much of the Readers time, in noting the Errors of the Doctors Introduction. And ſhall therefore note only one more. He teaches his Proſe-

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lytes (if he can gain any,) not to enquire about *the Metaphyſical Nature and Subſtance of the Three Perſons in the Ever Bleſſed Trinity* p. 26. And yet he ſays in the very ſame Page, that "*the diſtinct Powers and Offices of each, and the proper Honours due conſequently from us to each of them diſtinctly, is the Great Foundation and main Oeconomy of the Chriſtian Religion*; And therefore of abſolute Neceſſity to be known and practiced. Now how we can give to *each of theſe Perſons* his proper Honour without knowing whether the *ſecond* and *third* be *God or not God*, and how we can know whether theſe be *God or not*, without knowing *their Nature*; I cannot underſtand. But perhaps the *Epithete* [*Metaphyſical*] may make ſome Alteration in the Doctors meaning of the Word *Nature*; and he may Two or Three Years hence explain himſelf about theſe matters, and tell us he means by the Metaphyſical Nature of the Son and holy Spirit of God *the ſupreme ſelf-exiſtent Independent Deity.*

To whom Father Son and Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons in one God be all Honour and Glory for ever, Amen.

FINIS.

To whom Father Son and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God be all Honour and Glory for ever. Amen.

FINIS